



Washington State Department of Early Learning

ECEAP POLICY MEMO 06-05

SUBJECT: ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN IN KINSHIP CARE

This policy offers guidance when determining the eligibility for over-income families that provide kinship care.

Kinship care is the full-time care of a child provided by someone other than the parent who is related to the child by family ties or by a significant prior relationship. Families may formally or informally arrange care for their child through kinship relationships. Kinship care may also be the preferable choice in lieu of placing a child in foster care.

ECEAP recognizes both the strengths and challenges for the children and families involved in kinship arrangements. Many resources and support services are designed specifically to help families cope with their changed circumstances. For example, DSHS provides a TANF grant for relatives caring for children, or "In Loco Parentis."

Being aware of this growing trend, the State ECEAP Office set up these guidelines for determining eligibility of families that provide kinship care if their income falls above 110% of the FPG. The following questions must be answered:

1. Is this a temporary situation?
 - If so, the child may qualify as homeless according to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. (see Standards B-5, B-6 and B-7).
2. Do the family members receive a DSHS TANF "Non-Needy Relative, In Loco Parentis, and Legal Guardianship Grant?"
 - If so, the family automatically qualifies as a TANF recipient. Record the TANF grant as the income and count only the child/children in the family size (see Standard B-2).
3. Are there environmental factors that pose unique challenges for the family? These factors can be in the form of domestic violence, chemical dependency, child protective services involvement, or other factors that affect school success.
 - If so, the family would qualify as an over-income family (see Standard B-4).

Please contact your ECEAP Program Specialist with any questions.